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VOICE OF A NEW RACE.

ORIGINAL SELECTIONS

OF

POEMS,

WITH A

TRILOGY AND ORATION,

BY

JOSEPH T. WILSON.

Hampton, Virginia :  
Normal School Steam Press.

1882.



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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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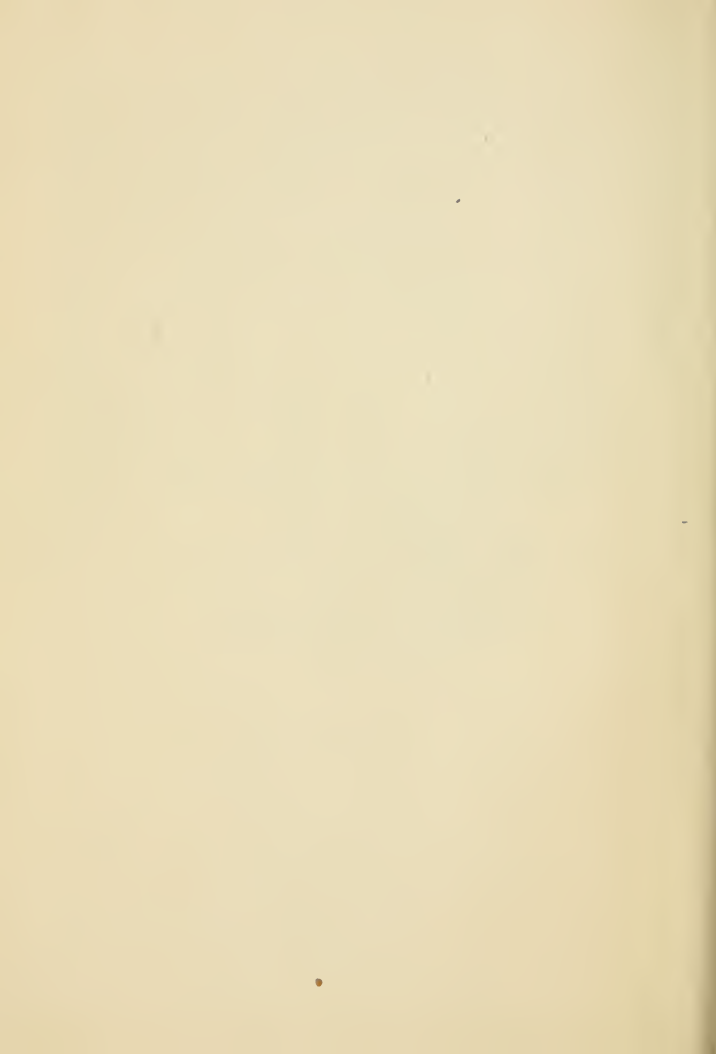
*Reader :—The contents of this volume—written at different times during the last fifteen years, were written not with a view of publishing them in this form ; not to make a book. Having acquired the habit of penning my thoughts upon subjects that presented themselves to my mind ; events, and circumstances, and happenings coming within my observation and of my knowledge, I have aimed to preserve the memory of them in verse No literary merit is claimed for these productions, nor are they savored with poetic genius ; the author is not a scholar—hardly a student—and without ambition to appear in public as a critique or historian, but having published these writings in several newspapers, I now, at the suggestion of friends, publish them in this form. As the subjects are those which concern the NEW RACE and its freedom most, they are written in its language and voice. The oration was not intended for publica-*

tion, and only at the earnest solicitation of the members of *Caillour Post*, before whom and in the presence of several hundred people it was delivered, it is published now, and published just as delivered. That, since 1860, a new race has been springing from the loins of the old races and tribes which have inhabited the United States since 1620, no one of course will deny, and that these poems are the voice of that New Race, I submit to the judgment of the public, to whom they are submitted.

J. T. WILSON.

Norfolk, Va., May, 1882.

DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE WHO FELL  
AT OLUSTEE, FLORIDA,  
FEBRUARY 20th, 1864,  
AND THOSE WHO FELL AT  
PORT HUDSON, LOUISIANA,  
DURING THE SEIGE, 1863,  
IN DEFENCE OF THE UNION,  
BY THE AUTHOR.





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## ANDRE CAILLOUX.

---

*“ Make way for liberty he cried,  
Made way for liberty and died.”*  
*Montgomery.*

In 1863 General Banks called for volunteers to capture a very formidable battery on the Mississippi River, before Port Hudson; the First Regiment Louisiana Native Guard Volunteers responded. This regiment was composed and officered by Negroes, save Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel.

In the charge Captain Cailloux, of New Orleans, was wounded, and lay forty days between the two lines, where he died

## ANDRE CAILLOUX.

---

He lay just where he fell,  
Soddening in a fervid summer's sun,  
Guarded by an enemy's hissing shell,  
Rottenning under the sound of rebels' gun  
Forty consecutive days,  
In sight of his own tent,  
And the remnant of his regiment.

A flag of truce couldn't save,  
No, nor humanity could not give  
This sable warrior a hallowed grave,  
Nor army of the gulf retrieve.  
Forty consecutive days,  
His lifeless body, pierced and rent,  
Leading in assault the black regiment.

He lay just where he fell,  
Nearest the rebels' redoubt and trench,  
Under the very fire of hell,  
A volunteer in a country's defence,  
Forty consecutive days,  
And not a murmur of discontent,  
Went from the loyal black regiment.

But there came days at length,  
When Hudson felt their blast,  
Though less a thousand in strength,  
For "our leader" vowed the last ;  
Forty consecutive days  
They stormed, they charged, God sent  
Victory to the loyal black regiment.

He lay just where he fell,  
And now the ground was their's,  
Around his mellowed corpse, heavens tell,  
How his comrades for freedom swear,  
Forty consecutive nights  
The advance pass-word went,  
Captain Cailloux of the black regiment.

## THE BLACK ALLIES.

"It was admitted that these Negro regiments saved our army."—*American Conflict.*

---

The cannons ceased their thunder,  
About the close of day,  
And Seymour's host was routed  
On the plains of Olustee.

Ah ! Stop, there were three thousand  
Of Afric's noble sons,  
Who entered in this conflict  
On the plains of Olestee.

And Seymour loudly shouted,  
Amid the leaden rain,  
"In, my boys" and save us,  
On the plains of Olustee.

Though weary from the marches  
Of three successive days,  
They bore the brunt of battle,  
On the plains of Olustee.

Where, where are they ? its over ;  
The battle's lost, not won,  
And the moon is gently rising,  
O'er the plains of Olustee.

Are they too, retreating ?  
Not all, the answer came :  
Six hundred now lay sleeping,  
On the plains of Olustee.

Ye sable mothers, widows, daughters,  
Weep not for the slain ;  
Rather crown with wreaths of honor,  
The Black Allies of Olustee.

## THE NEGRO STATESMAN.

---

*I insist that by the law of the land, all persons, without distinction of color, shall be equal before the law.*

*Sumner.*

On the 20th of December, 1871, Charles Sumner, a Senator, representing the State of Massachusetts in the Senate of the United States, offered his bill known as the Civil Rights Bill, as an amendment to the General Amnesty Bill, then pending before that body; feeling a deep interest in both of these measures—one proposing pardon to those who took up arms against the National Government, and the other proposing Equal Civil Rights to the Negro race—I ventured to hear the discussion of the measures from which this legend takes its origin.

## THE NEGRO STATESMAN.

Buried deep beneath the towering crest  
Round which storms in their passage  
From sky to earth, circled so oft, so harmlessly;  
Lived a single spark of fire:  
Mankind had never seen the spot,  
Angels the soil had ne'er trod,  
Deep in the bowels of the earth,  
It lay buried by the hand of God.  
Sweet zephyrs from the fatherland,  
Not the sulphurous gales of hell,  
Breathed on the lonely dweller there:  
Nature,—God! the nutriment of all good,  
Fed the smouldering, single spark of fire.  
Ages passed by. Vesuvius stood beetling  
O'er the calm placid waters,—  
Neapolitan's highway to the seas.  
The world in its revolutions felt the shock,  
As Lisbon fell victim to the quaking earth;  
And swore 'twas Nature bursting from her confines,  
To assert her right mid-air.  
She came unheralded, save by the surging sea  
Simultaneously rending her rock-ribbed  
Shores, upon which her terror-stricken populace strove,  
The guard at Pompeii's gateway, saw  
The protruding peak of the colossal mount,  
Suddenly enveloped in a sheet of flame,  
While Pompeians and Herculians  
Vied in frolicsome revelry,—  
And gave the unheeded alarm;  
And Pompeii and Herculaneum



Fell in the consuming fire.  
Sat a Negro thus pondering o'er  
The unheeded lessons of the past.  
Sat gazing at "Liberty" perched high  
Upon the National dome, waiting—  
O! 'Twas a great day;  
The learned men of the nation,  
Gathered under the canopy of our Goddess' shadow,  
Deliberately to discuss, intentionally to argue  
The rights and wrongs of the people,  
Waiting patiently, yet hoping and fearing,  
The approaching hour of ten.  
Thousands hither and thither urgently  
Bent their way to the House or Senate,  
To hear of a nation's treasury depleted,  
Of pockets filled therefrom, or of a race  
Oppressed and cheated of their rights  
In their native land by their friends.  
Consulting Mnemosyne, thus he murmured to himself:  
"This magnificent structure,  
Monument of the heroic endurance of my race,  
Whose labor builded it, within whose walls  
To-day, are to be praised for it, yea, rewarded.  
Son of Astrea, noblest in the Assembly,  
Amego! George and Dumas lisp thy name!  
Will rise up in his might of argument,  
To attest his devotion to 'God and the Right.'"  
Stupored with these remembrances,  
In an unguarded moment  
When all around was bustle and stir,  
He leaped from the lattice-cushioned sofa,  
And exclaimed, "I am free!"  
Then back as on Port Hudson road,  
Where Cailloux led the charge,  
Pierced then by bullets for freedom he fell.  
Ten o'clock struck; he aroused  
From his joyous lethargy.  
The chimes jingled again;  
The keen December air bore the news afar

Up through aisles, corridors and narrow passage ways ;  
He joined the national multitude,  
Pressing to the Senate galleries  
To hear, to see a witness to be.  
Oh! but how sad, how sickening the scene;  
He turned away from the chamber  
House of his friends, cold and dejected,  
To the un pitying warmth of a heartless world,  
Friendless and alone, despairing on earth to dwell,  
Or with mystic Ate to commune,  
Lest the fiendish prediction of his end  
Should surely come to pass.  
Deep in his erect manly form  
There was a sacred dweller;  
Sacred, because life drew from it vitality.  
Perchance Adam felt its glow  
When nature shrank from his embrace,  
And he left alone in inobedience,  
To choose for posterity, Eve's estate,  
Its future weal or woe.  
'Twas not said of the soul,  
"Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."  
The curse however contagious, ne'er reached the spot.  
Deep in the bosom of the American patriot  
Lives a single spark of fire;  
No fumes from brutish passions,  
Nor Serevansum gales disturb  
The lonely dweller there:  
The winds of misfortune may whistle  
Around his unprotected form;  
Storms of prejudice attack its cerements  
And bind him captive to oppression;  
But breezes from the eternal regions  
Of God's habitation, where caste is lost  
In the glorious equality of equal rights  
Feeds that slumbering spark of fire.  
Ignited sparks first began and fanned to flames  
By winds through nature's lanes.  
Shall we forget ?

Filled Toussaint's mortal frame with fire,  
 To sustain though Napoleon raged and reigned all  
     France and the East,  
 The cause of equal rights on Haytian plains.  
 And when the conqueror to his lonely prison came,  
 His soul departed from the accursed clay  
 To where a perfect justice ever reigns.  
 The wrongs of centuries past,  
 Wrote by the oppressor's pen,  
 "Mercer," to the toiling millions explanation lends,  
 Of outrages upon the weaker by the strong.  
 Now comes the indignant storm;  
 Vista, too, joins Vulcan's skill and might,  
 While Washingtonians vie with Baltimorians,  
 In festive dance and shout,  
 The guard at the National wicket  
 Saw the fire of indignant justice rise,  
 Rise above a cruel nation's crimes,  
 And gave, tho' unheeded, the alarm  
 Of the brewing civil storm.  
 South Carolina's outbreak, too, as did Baccari's before,  
 Heralded the consuming fire  
 That Virginia and Georgia shall fall victim to.  
 Not the red lava that ran in fiery streams  
 Through the streets when Del Gracio fell.  
 In the metropolis beautified her lantern post,  
 A lonely dwelling, home of the orphan unroofed,—  
 But copious streams of human love,  
 Binding together man to man as brothers,  
 Guaranteeing in common bond, equality to all

\* \* \* \* \*

Midnight! dark and stormy, clouds  
 That all that day hung about the heights of Arlington  
 Gathered o'er the Negro's cabin-home;  
 As he knelt beside his vacant couch,  
 Ope'd the portals above,  
 Furious winds and frozen vapor fell;  
 His eyes streaming tears, heart throbbing with fear,  
 It seem'd an enchantment;

He broke the spell: his voice rose  
 Above the muttering thunder imploringly,  
 "Oh Lord! how long shall the storm  
 Pour its weight upon my nation?  
 How long shall my race stand the shock?  
 From Howard where Apollo reigns,  
 See Minerva's crisp and wrinkled brow  
 Basking in the noonday sun,  
 Looking to thee, Father, for succor now,  
 Turn not thy face in anger ere we fall.  
 Filled with sad forebodings, Lord I come  
 Thy mercy to implore;  
 A guilty nation yet revolts  
 Against Thy holy law. Thy will be done!  
 Let this people feel a sinner's erring wrongs."  
 Ere his vesper prayer was done,  
 Subtle nature did him o'ercome,  
 He dreamed the nation's forum he'd won.  
 To tell the marvelous tale of his race,  
 Upon the Senate floor he stood;  
 A thousand waiting ears were open  
 To catch his matchless eloquence.  
 His voice, like the maddened wave that Lisbon felt,  
 When Neptune 'gainst her rose in might,  
 Seemed as he hurled each plaintive word,  
 Some smouldering spark to overturn.

\* \* \* \* \*

The grateful emotions which now possess me,  
 Are mingled with deep regret for the necessity  
 Laid upon me, of rising to defend  
 A scheme of Government,—a measure which  
 Proposes equal public privileges to all.  
 Ah! what is equality before the law.—  
 Equality in the law? 'Tis security to every man  
 Given by law, to be the equal  
 Of every other man in intellect, wealth, affluence and  
 influence, if he can be.  
 'Tis the opportunity, the letter and the spirit  
 Of the law, resting on all alike,

Because I am black, the color of the skin  
May enhance the opinion, where prejudice hast root,  
That I am lured by individualism,  
To contend for equal rights.  
But sirs, I speak not for myself alone,  
But for thousands of those who me have sent  
Do I plead here for equal public rights,  
For which your fathers and our fathers  
In the Revolutionary strife did fight.  
What need have I to repeat the story of  
The Negro's thralldom? 'tis old, 'tis passed,  
Tho' oft in rhythmic legend told. How  
Our fathers came to be your slaves:  
Borrowed from Heroditus, whose history takes preced-  
ent of yours and all,  
And tells of Afric's sires and sons,  
Our forefathers who 'neath the burning sun  
With knowledge to diffuse, came down the Nile,  
The arts and sciences your forefathers to teach.  
To teach the way sweet Liberty and Peace to reach.  
'Twas their theme, the art of being free.  
While yet your Saxon fathers, barbarians were  
Groping their way in ignorance below the stream.  
Oh, but once successful in the geophonic science, the  
art of letters achieved.  
Your fathers asked the science of the sun  
And 'twas given; with all these learned,  
Added to the rough Saxon mind and their kin,  
Ah, then they turned, as Cæsar marched  
From Gaul, marched from victory to conquer Rome,  
Marched from honor to dishonor a throne;  
So your fathers sallied and conquered Africa,  
And made slaves of their conquered prey, if slave can  
be made.  
This is gratitude. Oh gratitude, thou art a gem,  
Thou stranger to the white man—he to thee  
Is no friend, since our fathers he did enslave,  
Their temples desecrate—yea, pillaged for gold's sake  
and called Africa, Egypt;

Twice he called it so, High and Low.  
Vesuvius, ah, do you not remember that  
That mountain's side once stood subdued,  
By peasant's toil; but one day while the vines  
Were laden well down with fruits,  
No signal—no warning did the peasants have.  
But simultaneous with the deep thunder sound  
The sea and earth shook for miles around;  
A moment more—Vesuvius vomited forth  
Destruction and consuming fire. Alas!  
To-day at this season men dig deep down  
To find the buried Pompeian town:  
Each Negro that you meet upon the avenues  
Bears within him a spark, nature's spark of  
Freedom's fire, that Godly winds  
Soon may fan to flames that will devour  
The ills and wrongs done him, the hates  
And passions of the Anglo-Norman, the Anglo-American.  
Poor Indian, he laments the fraudulent treaty  
You made with him, the time he welcomed you  
To his hunting grounds, for since you burned  
his wigwams, chased him o'er the plains,  
Shot him as he lay asleep in the everglades;  
The Indian he is revengeful, warlike, will not yield,  
rather die than be enslaved.  
He waits your coming on the plains,  
And for this you honor him and pension him;  
When he comes in your midst all the avenues  
And public inns open up to him:  
State dinners do you prepare for him,  
And in your toasts call him "Friend;"  
And yet the law you made does not recognize him.  
But the Negro though credulous, yet firmly your  
friend, had sooner live  
A Christian slave, than die in the burning sands on  
Sahara's plains;  
A savage knave, exiled, free as the tiger's free,  
Which of these are the noblest?

Against the Negro, your benefactor, against Christians  
your avenues are closed,  
You bolt by statute the doors of the public inns, and  
tax him for schools  
You will not let his children in—  
And yet in the law he is called citizen.  
What manner in law and recognition is this ?  
Hear me, I prythe thee! Be patient, for my complaint  
is just. Harken unto  
Your father's voice, who trembled  
When he reflected that God was just.  
His justice will not always sleep.  
I come not as the prodigal Georgian returned,  
To represent the ill and hate, for they  
have none, of my constituents.  
But, sirs, I come laden with the tears and prayers,  
sufferings and hopes  
Of four millions of beings, whom your  
Galling chains of inequality doth wear.  
Aught have they ever done to you  
Save to build this massive, magnificent structure,  
filled with comfort and ease.  
Have you forgot? How, when they gained  
By fate the elective right, they sent you here  
By force of might; then you claimed to be their  
friend; sent you here to do what?  
To enforce by acts, the privileges  
Which custom bars them of, and corporations grant  
them not.  
Well, has that promise been kept, which you made  
mid the thunder of applause at  
Your quarto-annum parley.  
War necessity made the Negro free;  
You agree his manhood with yours the country from  
dissolution helped to save.  
Equal in patriotism even with the bravest brave.  
Equal now in the law,  
He seeks to be raised with those whose lives  
And fortunes he helped to save.

You who by might of numbers the sceptre sway, I  
swear shall rule, shall govern.

\* \* \* Here his voice faltering ceased ;

And stumbling rose upon his feet.

His cabin seemed the abode of chaos drear ;

The storm yet pattered on the cabin roof.

Despair shone in his bright though languid eyes ; as  
the vivid lightning lit

His cabin gloom. Ah ! what omen quoth he :

'Tis foul, 'tis fair ; It's the brooding mingled vision  
of hope, ambition, and despair.



## THE MAID OF OLUSTEE.

*Who shall disturb the brave,  
Or one leaf on their holy grave,  
The laurel is vowed to them;  
Leave the bay on its sacred stem,  
But this, the rose, the fading rose  
Alike for slave and freeman grows.*

*Bulwer*

## THE MAID OF OLUSTEE.

'Twas twilight a chilling breeze  
    Blew o'er swamp and plain,  
Where fell that day, beneath the rain  
    Of canister, shot and shell,—  
A thousand men—brave warriors,  
    Mangled and slain,  
And eight hundred more were maimed,  
    Battling there foes to repel;  
The breeze wafted eight miles afar  
    From the bloody field,  
Their prayers, and groans, to where  
    A maiden kneeled.

Evening came, and the moon's soft light  
    lit the battle's wreck,  
And lo, here and there, in heaps, the wounded  
    and the slain were lain,  
Piled high betwixt the trees like sacrifices  
    ready for the fire stack;  
When, from Sanderson station came  
    a maid of Samaritan fame,  
She was well laden with stores from the station,  
    'tho' no commission was there.

Sweet milk and cool water to battle with hunger  
    brought from the weir,  
She came, child of the Union, loyal and true,  
Daring daughter of Florida, with oil to pour,  
And her silvery voice went to God in fervent prayer,  
As she knelt betwixt two heaps of soldiers there,  
Where the battle had fiercest raged, there to save,  
She knelt betwixt death and the grave.

She wiped away the flowing blood,  
But, again and again it came oozing out.  
Twice the soldier had received a sabre thrust,  
And now, he lay dying in the dust.

The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh, mourned she,  
Blessed be the name of the Lord who saves.

Louder than the murmuring rivulet close by,  
She heard a deep sorrowing lamenting sigh,  
And quickly turning to whence it came,  
She met the gaze of her former slave.  
Oh! you who waged this cruel war are where?  
Yes, this cold earth should be your bier.

When she had bathed the features of the maimed,  
The wounds of her lover and her slave,  
Their banners seized, the bar'd White and Blue.  
And, the star sprangled Red White and Blue.  
Back went the maid to Sanderson station,  
Back soon she came with horses and wagon.

The moon had sunk below the pines,  
The stars went out in the blue azure sky,  
But the maid drove by the light of the fagot fires.  
Eight miles away, at lightning speed, inspired  
By the love she bore for country and for home,  
She'd promised her lover nor slave should die alone.

In her wagon side by side they lay, the Blue, the Grey,  
Two who fought that day their country to save,  
But as the maid mounted to drive away,  
Not far off she heard the clash of steel, her bays.  
In the flickering fagot light saw sabres gleam,  
And charging shouts made the empyrean ring, it seemed.

What though carbines rattle tell the fight's begun?  
What though cannons belching break the doleful mon-  
otone?

What if death await me down the road, am I alone?  
Have I no love, no fortitude, in heaven, no home?  
Begirt me, ye murderous arms, but my lover and slave  
God helping, e'er 'tis day, will be in Sandersonville.

Down the road, down the road, with lightning speed,  
Away away dashed her fiery steeds.

While louder and nearer came the clashing steel,  
Now through battle, neath clouds raised by flying  
wheels,

Her mustang's feet awhile beat in sacred blood,  
As buckets dip, dip successionaly in the ocean's flood.

Now the brazen cannons steadily awfully roar,  
Now volleys from column to column pour,  
Now whole ranks of brave men deaths missels mow,  
And the shrill bugle notes o'er the war clouds soar,  
Blade crossed blade in the Howitzer's murderous blaze,  
Yet, on through this, hell's corridon, on swept the maid.

One foot on the whiffle-tree one foot on the tongue,  
In their midst she rode while war gods sung,  
Determined her lover and slave to save,  
Though she drove o'er the dead on the edge of the grave,  
On: on dashed her mustangs, cruel and fleet,  
Leaping o'er fallen trees, crushing men 'neath their feet.

Eight miles away e'er 'twas day in Sandersonville,  
Eight miles away from the battle field stood the old mill,  
Whose ponderous wheel used to be turned by the rill,  
The old farm-house near by, on the top of the hill,  
There 'neath its roof as a child seeks its mother when  
distressed,  
The maid laid her lover and slave down to rest.

Day dawn on fields of verdure green and wavy grain,  
And the pean heralded the retreating warriors train,  
That left to the mercy of vultures, wounded and slain  
Comrades, who fought their country to save, their free-  
dom to gain,  
But, e'er the phalanx last column had passed,  
The maiden's lover and slave had breathed their last.

In her wagon side by side again lay Blue and Grey,  
Two who fell yesterday eve at Olustee, maimed in bat-  
tle array,  
They in youth in Ocean Pond had swam together,

And in death had clasped their cold hands in each other's,  
'Twas friendships rite, they never had been foes, and the  
    strife,  
Was not their own, though it won them a better life.

Deep in a Floridian Glen, home of the sweet scented  
    brier,  
Where a nightingale noonly sings and plays upon his  
    lyre,  
From whose flowery grown walls, which nature builded  
    on either hand,  
Like jets in a banquet hall, moistening below the silvery  
    sand,  
Bursting out, leaping high, up in the oderiferous rose-  
    mary air,  
A thousand veins of the mountain spouts the water clear.

There in this lone retreat, wrapped in their gory shroud,  
Annieta, laid them down, and, above her head hung  
    a cloud  
Streaked with the noon sun's glare, shone, Red White  
    and Blue,  
And the jet sprays fell from the blended radiant hue,  
Upon the soldiers' bier alike, whilst the burial rite An-  
    nieta read,  
'Twas God's approval, yes 'twas his baptism of the he-  
    roic dead.

Eleven vernal suns have spread their splendor and gone  
    since then,  
Annieta yet lives in her old farm-house near the glen,  
Where the Orange and Pomegranate blossom ever and  
    anon, where wave  
The lily white and sweet, -over her lover and her slave,  
And yearly on memorial day, mid the flowery fra-  
    grance of May,  
She garlands the graves where rest the Blue and the  
    Grey.

## BURIED ON SHORE.



Half mast the flags, red white and blue,  
Dim the lustre of each star, a victim  
To immortality has gone, a gallant Tar,  
Where fighting will be never more.

Give way, let the procession pass on,  
O'the mournful tread and roll,  
Minute guns mark but his stay, above the sod  
Beneath which soon he must be laid.

Ope wide ye gates, ye city of the dead,  
Let the solumn procession pass in,  
Comrades gather 'round his oaken bier,  
Now mariners their *requiem* volley fire.

'Tis finished, the victory in heaven's won,  
Cherubim answer the minute gun,  
In peace his morning hast come,  
They quicken their steps, unmuffle their drums.

TRIBUTE TO THE BRAVE.

## TRIBUTE TO THE BRAVE,

delivered at the National Cemetery, Hampton, Va., before Cailloux Post, No. 2, G. A. R., of Norfolk, and hundreds of other people, May 30th, 1881.

*Comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic:—*

Upon this hallowed ground we have assembled to perform a duty enjoined upon us by the mandate of the cause in which those of our comrades, who lay asleep in these green mounds, gave up all earthly associations, to perpetuate the inheritance of posterity to freedom, based upon the Union victory, in the achievement of which five-thousand brave defenders of liberty sleep in these mounds which surround us. No eulogy need be pronounced upon them here to day; no deep mouthed canons need roar in their praise; no bugle's blast, nor martial strains are needful to proclaim their heroism;—the peæn of their praise lives in the enjoyment of our freedom. Their valor lives not alone in the written history of the conflict in which they fell, but in the hearts of their countrymen. In every cabin in this wide and beautiful South land, there is an unwritten history of him who went out from beneath its lowly roof in quest of freedom; who laid aside the master's hoe and axe, and took up the country's sword and rifle; who exchanged the plantation garb for the Nation's blue livery; who resolved rather to die in an effort for freedom, than continue upon earth a slave. And they went, not in companies, and in regiments; but in batallions, and brigades, until they numbered two hundred thousand, and here within these walls, the bones of a thousand of them rest

We are here to-day, mindful that the Rebellion struggled for two years, each side fighting desperately, but the union side loosing continually. Here along this river,, General Mc Clellan's troops were encamped, engaged in the capture and return of fugitive slaves. General Fremont in the South-west, in keeping with the President's policy, is made to resign from the command of the army, because he armed Negroes in defense of the Union. Generals Phelps and Butler, down in the Gulf-state, found a brigade of free Negroes in the service of the rebels. The Chief of Police of New York city, informed the Negroes of that city, that they must desist drilling;—he could



not protect them; and when it became necessary for the government to draft men for the army, Negroes were hung to lamp-posts and telegraph poles. Negro babes were pitched into the street, and their asylum burned by those who refused to unite Union and Liberty in the struggle. The men and their sons, who have fitted out the ships that transported Negroes from Free Africa to Slave America, led the riots at the North, against the lovers of freedom. *Free* Massachusetts, the haven of the fleeing fugitive, by her constitution, barred Negroes from her militia force. Not a state in the North, bore the name of a Negro upon her militia rolls; where Attucks fell, the ground was not consecrated to equal freedom yet. Bunker Hill was a myth: the surrender of Yorktown meant freedom only for the white man. Major Jeffries, a Tennessean, who at Mobile filled the place of regular in the American army under General Stump, and saved the army from annihilation by the British, after peace and Independence, received thirty nine lashes upon his bare back, for daring to strike a ruffian, and from the effects of which he died. Notwithstanding Simeon Lee served in Virginia during the memorable Revolutionary struggle up to the close of the war;—immediately after the surrender at Yorktown, Lee was returned to his master, and finally died on his tobacco plantation. Virginia, true to her instincts of chivalry, as a mark of just recognition of the valor of the Negroes who fought in the war for independence; her legislature the year after the victory at Yorktown, manumitted several slaves who fought, with and were members of her militia, and the free Negroes names were borne upon her pension rolls, though the Negro fought side by side throughout the revolutionary war, with his white-skinned brother, the victory gained did not loosen the shackles of slavery riveted upon him, and he continued the same chattel. Heroism, whether upon the deck of Perry's fleet, or in the field with Andrew Jackson at New Orleans, seemed insufficient to destroy the wrong,—the upas of manhood, the curse of slavery. But Providence is equal to every emergency, and though it permitted for two hundred years the traffic, the flag that now floats so proudly over our heads, was for a quarter of a century, the sole protecting symbol to the African-slave trade,

upon the ocean, by the blood, and valor of those of our comrades that lay speechless before us, in common with the millions more whodid service for their country, and their homes, that dear old-new flag, has become the symbol of constitutional liberty, and the inspiring genius of universal emancipation to mankind.

There were days when the muse of freedom sang to the Nation her reproachful song: "Tear down the bloody sheen, it shields a pirate's deck;—it binds our fellow man in chains"! But that was the flag of the fugitive slave law; the banner of Preston Brooks and Daniel Webster; this is the flag of our Country; the emblem of religious liberty.

The Christian looks upon the rainbow in the glowing sun-set, its variegated hues blending with a radiant sky, with reliant joy that the world will not be deluged again. The patriot gazes upon the streaming folds of the American banner as it kisses the blue azure, as it floats in the balmy air, its lucid stars shedding glory upon the place beneath, with gladdened heart that his country is free; and the mariner, as his bark nears the shore of his native land, greets the high hills of his native home "Ye, are the things that tower, whose smile makes glad, whose frown is terrible. I have sailed in my boat at night, and when midway on the lake the stars went out, and down the mountain gorge, the wind came roaring, and I sat and eyed him break his thunder from the clouds, and smiled to see him shake his lightning o'er my head, and thought of other lands whose storms are summer flows to those of mine, and just have wished me there;—the thought that is free has checked that wish, and I have raised my hands and cried in my thralldom, to the furious wind; "blow on, this is the land of Liberty!"

Those black soldiers, and those white soldiers, have not died in vain. A just God has crowned their united effort for the redemption of their country, and we are here to-day in the enjoyment of the liberty their blood purchased for their inhabitants of the world. "No matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced; no matter what complexion incompatible to freedom, an Indian or an African sun may have burnt upon him; no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty

may have been cloven down; no matter with what solemnity he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery;—the first moment he touches the sacred soil of our country; the moment he stands beneath the folds of our blood-stained banner,—the altar and the god sink together in the dust, his soul walks abroad in her own majesty; his body swells beyond the measure of his chains that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled by the irresistible influence of our free institutions.

Sixteen hundred and twenty—what a vista to look back through! A period till now of gloom, dismay, and tyranny. Oh! what hopes, what fears and what maledictions. Two hundred and sixty years ago, the ancestry of the 200,000 Negroes, who in spite of terror meditated against them, with indifference to the un-Christian-like prejudice that existed against them, and in the face of the “black flag” raised against them; volunteered, *yes, volunteered* and entered the pro-slavery ranks of the Union Army. *Their* ancestry were landed from that Dutch man of war, a few miles above where we now stand, and sold as chattle to the English settlers, and from 1620 to 1860, they were sold, and tortured, and worked as cattle and beasts of burden, and their white comrades who lay here asleep, side by side with them; are those who were willing to purge the nation of the curse and sin their fore-fathers heaped upon it; and right well have they given atonement.

The sacrifice the white man made for the Negro's freedom, however tardy, is ample to restore the link broken in the chain of brotherhood, by two hundred and forty years of inhuman slavery, and in recognition of that fact, we, the surviving representatives of that race, are here to-day with flowers to garland the graves of the sacrificed, and to pledge anew, our allied strength to the maintenance of the Union with Liberty, for which they gave their lives. Well might the Chief Magistrate of the Nation, when looking into the faces of sixty thousand veterans, scarred and maimed, have testified that during the long night of war. not a traitor in black skin was found. What a tribute is this to a race, despised by too many of those who to-day have a country and a home preserved to them through the industry and valor of its yeomanry. Name the

race that merits such a tribute;—certainly it is not on this side of the Atlantic or this zone. Men more desperate, more sanguine, may have followers; Hannibal across the Alps, may have crossed with the Father of his Country, the icy Deleware. We have heard of the six hundred and their daring ride; we have read about the brave men who fought at Lodi, and of the famed “Old Guard,” at Marengo, and at Waterloo, and the applause that nations gave them as they rushed up to the cannon’s mouth, and as they stood before a torrent of fire, to shield their leader Bonaparte, from harm.

The iron nerve, the patriotic valor, the incomprehensible courage, the indubitable heroism of the 200,000 Negroes who entered the Union conflict for liberty and equality before the law; their sufferings and privations, their long marches and stubborn fights, their impregnable alignments, the terrible charges endured and made, for the freedom of their race and country, entitles them, and the thousand of them buried here, to be canonized in the choicest gifts of nature. No braver men than they, ever stood before as brave an enemy.

Comrades, let us pause a moment, hark! Be as silent as you were at New Market heights, when at early-dawn, you went down the hill with nipple-less guns; do we hear the bugle’s call of forward,—double-quick? And now do we hear the echo of our shout, “Remember Fort Pillow”?—The bugle-call has gone like the spirit of our comrades who fell before the enemies murderous guns, to the God of battles; and the shout, to the region of Lethe’s wharf, and lingers upon the banks of that River. God forbid that I should say aught to-day, at this hour, to arouse any of resentment, feeling towards those brave men who killed our comrades in the endeavor to perpetuate slavery upon us. Yet how prudent for us to remember that from Port Hudson to Richmond, the blood of our brothers, moistened the soil; that their bones lie scattered in front of every deemed-impregnable work, Wherever the fight was strongest, they were. Where the enemy’s cyclone of fire swept, they fell the thickest. When the enemy resorted to savage butchery, they were the victims; it was they at Petersburg, who felt the quaking mines; and they at Wagner with the butts of their muskets, won the signal victory.

The civilized world stood on tip-toe, as a troop of unarmed Negroes dashed up over the ramparts of the Gibraltar of the Mississippi, and threw in their hand-grenades, and bags of cotton, without artillery to shield, or cavalry to protect them; they had enemies in front of them, enemies to the right and left of them; enemies in their rear. They fought, they bled, they conquered. *They* were not filled with hatred. their bosoms did not heave revengefully toward their lords, who confronted them; their pulse did not beat angrily because their freedom was denied them. They did not massacre their prisoners in retaliation for Chalmers' feast of blood, at Fort Pillow. Their fight was a Christian warfare for religious liberty, and God blessed them with victory, and crowned their effort with freedom, and in the enjoyment of that dearly purchased freedom, we are here to-day to do reverence to their memory.

My countrymen, there are gathered in the National cemeteries, the remains of over 40,000 black Union soldiers; and 300,000 white Union soldiers. These maimed, mutilated bodies, are the Nation's holocaust, sacrificed upon the altar of free government, for the perpetuity of the principles of equal civil and political rights for all men. To you and to your posterity, the duty of maintaining and preserving those principles and this government has devolved. Such an important trust cannot be lightly assumed; and here around the graves of our fallen heroes, let us resolve to rededicate ourselves with renewed energy to the task of steadily advancing these principles, until man in this government shall be known by his virtue and worth, and not by the color of his skin.

That I have spoken more particularly to-day concerning the black soldier, is not because they fought better than their white brothers with whom they were allied. The tribute I have aimed at their qualities, their heroism and patient devotion to the flag that for nearly a century "had only been to them a flag of stripes, on which no star of glory had ever shone for them," The white soldier is equally deserving of, only that black soldiers fought under vastly more disadvantageous circumstances,

My comrades, we are not here to-day in the brazen pomp

of conquest; 'tis not to commemorate the day we met the enemy in the open field, and put them to flight by the favor of the God of battle; but to strew flowers on the graves of our fallen brothers. Our mission is the peace-votive offering of a grateful people, to the memory of their brave deliverers from a cruel bondage. Here too, are the remains of those,

“Who too honest, or too proud, to feign  
A love they never cherished,  
Beyond Virginia's border line,  
Their patriotism perished.

While others hailed in distant skies,  
Our eagle's dusky pinion,  
They only saw the mountain bird  
Stoop o'er the 'Old Dominion.'”

Not they alone, are responsible for the cause of the war; not they alone are accountable for the bondage through which we passed *en route* to civilization and freedom. *Ignorance* entailed the two hundred and fifty years of slavery upon the black man.

Africa and her ignorant, war-like tribes, have a portion, and the greater portion of the guilt and sin of the curse of Negro slavery, to bear which under this “State's Rights” theory, these confederates that sleep beneath these green mounds, gave up their lives, and their fortunes, clinging to their principles, as does the shipwrecked mariner to his last plank, when tempests and black night environ him. Heroically they suffered, fought, and died.

Comrades, we have also a garland for their graves,. The Poet expresses the sentiment and principles of our Grand Army:

“Roll not a drum, sound not a clarion note  
Of haughty triumph to the silent sky:  
Hushed be the shout of joy in every throat,  
And veiled be the flash of pride in every eye.

Not with *Te Deums* loud and high hosannas,  
Greet we the awful victory we have won,  
But with our arms reversed and lowered banners,  
We stand—our work is done !

Thy work is done, God, terrible and just,  
Who laid'st upon our hearts and hands this task,  
And kneeling with our foreheads in the dust,  
We venture peace to ask.

Bleeding and writhing underneath our sword,  
Prostrate our brethren lie,  
Struck down by *Thee* through us avenging Lord—  
By Thy dread hand laid low.

*For our own guilt* have we been doomed to smite  
These our own kindred, Thy great laws defying,  
These, our own flesh and blood, who now unite  
In one thing only with us—bravely dying.

Dying how bravely, yet how bitterly !  
Not for the better side, but for the worse,  
Blindly and madly striving against Thee  
For the bad cause where Thou hast set Thy curse.

At whose defeat we may not raise our voice,  
Save in the deep thanksgiving of our prayers,  
Lord ! we have fought the fight ! But to rejoice  
Is ours no more than theirs.

Call back Thy dreadful ministers of wrath  
Who have led on our hosts to this great day ;  
Let our feet halt now in the avenger's path,  
And bid our weapons stay.

Upon our land, Freedom's inheritance,  
Turn Thou once more the splendor of Thy face ;  
Where Nations serving Thee, to light advance,  
Give us again our place.

For our bewildering past, prosperity,  
Not all Thy former ill-requitted grace,  
But this one boon—Oh! grant us still to be  
The home of Hope to the whole human race.



NEW MARKET HEIGHTS.

## NEW MARKET HEIGHTS.

"Freedom their battle cry,"

"*Freedom or leave to die.*"

*Boker.*

At New Market Heights, there Afric's lineage stood,  
And poured out copiously its best blood;  
Of them I would sing, my lyre's restrung,  
And allures not diffidently to the song,  
Paternal muse with thy patriot valor reign  
Supreme, and the brightness of ages regain,  
In the deep recess of the past  
Lower me, to where the battle's blast  
Has been given to oblivion, the sigh  
Of dying patriots let greet me nigh,  
And my thoughts waft on memory's wing,  
To where their charging shouts yet ring.

If mine the task indulgent muse vouchsafed,  
Whilst I commune 'mongst bones that paved.  
And flesh that bridged the chasm o'er,  
Where Butler numbered five hundred and more  
Of Afric's sons, who for liberty fell,  
In the corridors of a stockaded hell.  
I'll essay their deeds of valor done,  
By which the nation its victory won.

'Twas early in the grey September morn,  
E're the suns fulgent light had shown,  
Whilst departed patriots looked out from above,  
Emitting their twinkling silvery light of love,  
Upon the silent bivouac of freedom's sons,  
Weary and resting upon their bayonetless guns;  
Quite near the bank of the James,  
Just above where their own fathers' names,  
Were first enrolled as ignoble slaves,  
*The Second Brigade*, valiant men and braves,  
Saw a meteor like rocket burst high,  
High up in the dewey morning sky,

Then came the summons prepare to away,  
Butler leads to New Market heights at day.  
Beat the long roll, sound the alarm,  
Break the monotone and the dead calm,  
And the bugle's clarion notes aroused, awoke,  
The host that waited e're day broke;  
Infantry, cavalry prepared to make away,  
Butler leads to New Market heights at day.

From rank to rank the summons ran,  
Bayonets rattle and clank of sabres began,  
With whetted steel the sturdy axe-men,  
Capless rifle-men, horseless cavalry men.  
Formed on that plain in battle array;  
Butler leads to New Market heights at day.

When the flash of dawn was breaking,  
Their leader rode in front, and speaking,  
Gave the charging shout "*Remember Fort Pillow,*"  
And their banners brightened in the mellow  
Light of heaven; "*Forward,*" they marched away,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

Went down the hill across the marsh,—  
Into the brook—there halted—ah ! how harsh  
The rebels fire opened upon them, artillery  
Hail swept the run, and the infantry  
Broke, the column wavered tho' not in dismay,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

Again the shattered columns form and again advance  
To firmer ground, tho' the redoubt hurl'd like an  
avalanche,  
In quick succession, bursting bombs and canister shot,  
But with closed ranks the column, fearing not  
Unheedful of the iron hail bent its way,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

Now the head of the column of fours go down  
Under the murderous fire and the hissing song  
Of the enemys shells, now the axe men spring  
To the *abatis* high and long, now their axes ring  
Out on the morning air, they were swept away,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

The flags are where, do they kiss the morning light,  
Do they wave in the battle's gale, are their stars bright,  
Illumining the path of the brave? riddled and torn,  
With the dead they lay. Soon again they shone,  
In the first gleam of the rising-sun's ray,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

Upon the brigade each felt that all was placed,  
Their race and country's future honored or disgraced,  
Hence with Spartan courage they the charge renewed,  
And in hot haste the Nation's enemy purs'ned,  
And sweat and blood from pore and wound inveigh,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

"*Forward, forward!*" rung the command, the flags are  
up again,  
The axe-men grin, and with a shout go over the slain,  
To a second line of *abatis*. The welkin's aglow,  
The advancing brigade shouts, "*Remember Fort Pillow!*"  
And with a will and spirit they clear the way,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

Down the dismounted cavalrymen fall by ranks,  
The Infantry an adamant wall on the flanks,  
Close up briskly on right and left and receive  
The infilading fire from the brazen crest, breathe  
They not a word in complaint, freedom's impulse obey,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

Now the black axe-men tear from the sod the huge logs,  
Which science and treason placed deep in the bogs,  
Skill gave way to freedom's might in the dastardly fight,

And the black brigade, with capless rifles and starry  
light,  
Go through the gap to the Rebel's hell in gallant array,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

Volley after volley poured, cannon after cannon roared,  
Like reapers in a field a thousand artillerists mowed  
In the gap, the brigade's advancing files of four,  
Yet on through the flood of death still the brigade pour,  
Their battle cry, *Remember Fort Pillow*, the enemy dismay,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

Hark! above the raging carnage swells the shout,  
“*No quarters to Niggers*,” with hope of a rout,  
But the brigade was not deterred, they retaliate  
The defiant yells, *Remember Fort Pillow*, the fate  
Of its garrison how it fell, on through the fray,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

On for the *redoubt* over the rampart they go,  
Not a rifle was fired, not a shot at the foe,  
By the weight of the column the *redoubt* is theirs,  
And the enemy routed, the chivalry scattered everywhere,  
Victorious shouts the empyrean ring in repay,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

In the track of the brigade lay the loyal dead,  
Afric's hecatomb, her lineage's pyre to liberty wed,  
Their upturned countenances to the burning sun,  
Were appeals to Mars for their race's freedom won,  
Five hundred lives on the patriotic altar lay,  
Following Butler to New Market heights that day.

No marble shaft or granite pile mark the spot  
Where they fell—their bones lay harvested from sun-rot,  
In the Nation's cities of the dead. Hannibal led  
No braver than they through Alpine snow, nor wed  
To freedom were Greece's phalanx more, who o'er gory  
clay  
Followed Butler to New Market heights that day.















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